

ILL OMEN OF SPILLING SALT.
Superstition Has Come Down to Us
from the Ancient Romans.

Girls and boys have all heard, perhaps, that it is "unlucky" to spill salt, but that the evil effects may probably be averted by throwing some of it over your right shoulder. It is wonderful how old some of these superstitions are! This one about the salt, for example, came to us from the ancient Romans. Salt was regarded by them as an emblem of purification, and they always placed some on the head of a victim in sacrifice. If the salt were spilled in doing this, it was looked upon as a bad omen.

It is said that the Romans got the custom from the Jews, and after a while the spilling of salt on any occasion was regarded as unlucky. The custom of throwing a part of it over the right shoulder arose from their belief that anything pertaining to the right side was lucky, but to the left side, unlucky.

TO SEND BACK SHIP'S SOUNDS.
Experiments with New Safety Device for Foggy Weather.

The United States government is experimenting in San Francisco bay with a safety device for foggy weather which is remarkable in the uniqueness of its idea. It is nothing less than a fog buoy which will make no use of its own light, but which will be expected to catch the sound waves of a vessel's whistle and echo them back across the water.

The buoy, or structure, is constructed of corrugated iron sheeting, placed on piles, and built in three wings placed at different angles. Each wing is 32 feet square.

The idea was given birth accidentally. There has always been much trouble in the upper part of San Francisco bay because the shore light cannot be seen when the weather is bad. Pilots and skippers began to notice, however, how clearly the corrugated steel warehouses around Benicia returned the sound of their whistles, and for some time have been guiding their way along by the echoes. The government is confident that the new buoys will act in the same manner.

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FARMING IN THE SOUTH
PEANUT CULTURE.

Varieties—Soil—Time of Planting—
Cultivation—Harvesting—Yield—
Preparation for Market.

The Louisiana State Board of Agriculture and Immigration and the Experiment Station has issued the following on peanut culture, prepared by W. R. Dodson, Director, Agricultural Experiment Stations:

In view of the frequent inquiries regarding the cultivation of peanuts, the following condensed statement has been prepared giving the most pertinent facts secured from the Louisiana Experiment Stations and other experimental stations in the South:

Varieties—The large peanuts usually seen at the confectioneries are the "Virginia" or "Tennessee" "red" or "white" varieties. The Virginia or Tennessee red is more popular on the market and there seem to be better suited to Louisiana conditions than the two white varieties. The "Spanish" peanut has a smaller pea and has a more erect habit of growth, and the peas adhere to the vines with greater tenacity in the harvest than is characteristic with the other varieties. The Spanish peanut is, therefore, easier to harvest for forage or market than the other varieties. The Spanish variety is not quite as rich in oil as some of the large varieties. The so-called "Mammoth" varieties are not desirable so far as the indications of the experiments at the Louisiana Stations go. The yields are small and many of the pods are not well filled. The Spanish is generally preferred for forage and possibly for other purposes on account of less labor involved in harvesting.

Soil—Almost any well drained soil in Louisiana will produce a fair crop of peanuts. The sandy soil with moderate amount of humus is preferred. Silt soils frequently produce good crops, but it is difficult to harvest the pea satisfactorily and free it from dirt. Red soils, containing a large quantity of iron, color the pods and injure the market qualities. Soils containing a large amount of stable manure or decomposing vegetable matter are liable to produce excessive vines and a small yield of peanuts.

Time of Planting—Peanuts should not be planted until all danger of frost has passed. They may be planted as late as the middle of June and a good crop made.

Preparation of the Soil—Prepare the soil as for ordinary staple crops. As clean culture is desirable, land that is comparatively free of weed and grass seeds is to be preferred.

Planting—Very slight ridges should be prepared in ordinary soils, in the more sandy soils, the flat row should be used. The rows may be arranged from two and a half to three feet apart. The closer rows have been found to give the largest yields. The hills in the row should be from six inches to a foot and a half apart. Usually the short distance is used with the small varieties and the poor land and the maximum distance with the large varieties and the richer land. Generally two pens are planted to the hill. In early planting cover some what deeper. It is the general practice to shell the peas before planting. Good results are secured by simply breaking the pods, but they do not come up as quickly when planted this way as when shelled before planting. Planting the whole pods delays germination and generally prevents securing a first-class stand. It will require from one to two bushels of peas in the hill to plant an acre.

Cultivation—Frequent shallow cultivation up to the time that the vines begin to bloom gives the most satisfactory results. No special precautions are necessary in the cultivation of the crop. After the blooms begin to appear the vines should be disturbed as little as possible, though the middle may still be cultivated lightly with any implement most convenient.

Harvesting—Harvesting should begin as soon as a large per cent of the peas have matured. If the work is delayed and unfavorable weather prevails there will be greater loss from the germination of the peas as they mature than will be compensated for by the maturity of the later formed peas. The common method of harvesting is to offset the row with a turnplow. Then lift out each hill separately with a ground fork, shaking the bunch to release the adhering dirt. Two or three rows are bunched together and curing is very much after the order commonly followed in winnowing hay. When a considerable crop is produced they are shocked in small shocks around a stick driven in the ground, making the shocks

Judge MacFarlane of Pittsburg, has decided that a shipper who loses his produce while in the hands of express or railroad companies cannot recover damages if he fails to state the true value of the article shipped.

The American hen produced in fowls and eggs more than \$600,000,000 in 1907.

The customs service of China estimates the total population of that country at 432,211,000.

one to four feet in diameter and five to six feet high, capping the shock with grass. The shock is allowed to stand until the peas and vines are thoroughly cured.

Yield—A good crop in any portion of Louisiana should yield from sixty-five to 100 bushels per acre. The Experiment Stations have produced a little over 100 bushels per acre on a good crop. The Arkansas Station reports yields of from ninety-five to 172 bushels per acre. Reports from small farmers in north Louisiana indicate yields in that section of from eighty to 100 bushels per acre.

Preparation for Market—To be prepared for the market the peas must be separated from the vines and thoroughly ridged of the adhering dirt. Various mechanical devices are helpful in this work. Peanut threshers are on the market and are said to do satisfactory work.

Price—The price per bushel of twenty-two pounds varies from 50 to 85 cents. The average price for ten years at Norfolk, Va., is said to be 65 cents per bushel.

Peanuts for Oil Production—Peanuts contain from 35 to 50 per cent oil. Prime oil is said to be worth 65 cents per gallon. The lower grades used for soap stock would bring a much lower price, as they would come into competition with the soap stock in the form of cotton seed oil. The residue after the oil is extracted is a valuable stock feed and should bring from \$20 to \$25 per ton when the meats and hulls are mixed, or from \$25 to \$30 per ton when the hulls are separated before the oil is extracted.

Peanut Hay—Peanut hay, when well cured is a most excellent forage. The Louisiana Stations have shown that peanuts are most excellent for fattening hogs. The Arkansas Station found that one-fourth acre in peanuts produced 313 pounds of pork, while the same amount of land in corn produced only 109 pounds of pork. The Alabama Station found that hogs fattening on a peanut field made much cheaper gains than on cowpeas, sweet potatoes or sorghum.

How Prize Lambs Were Fed.

F. E. Bryant of the Pecos valley, New Mexico, exhibited a load of lambs at the recent international stock show and took first prize on them, demonstrating to his countrymen that he knows how to grow good ones. The lambs were dropped early in March, the mothers being cull ewes past their usefulness on the range. They had been put on alfalfa pasture in the fall before. Through the summer the lambs were on pasture with the ewes until they were weaned August 15. From that time on they were fed green cow peas and other green feeds and alfalfa hay in the feed lot. They were finished on corn, alfalfa, hay, beets and other root crops. Mr. Bryant gave the feeding his personal attention and the result shows that he knew his business. The lambs were eight days on the trip to Chicago and won first out of sixteen entries. They averaged 116 pounds.

Slaughter of Birds.

By killing insect-eating birds Americans are robbing posterity and permitting an annual crop loss of \$800,000,000 according to William Dutcher, president of the National Association of Audubon Societies. If we permit the heritage of wild birds that still exist to be further wasted and destroyed, we are robbing our children, declared Mr. Dutcher. The people, as trustees, are in honor bound to preserve these wild birds for those that follow us. We do not wish our children to feel about us as we do about our fathers, who permitted the wanton and useless extinction of the bison and the wild pigeon. In the matter of bird legislation there is no resting place; the only price of satisfactory bird protection is eternal watching of legislatures, for in an unguarded moment an amendment may be passed that will undo the work of years.

A Valuable Tree.

There is a tree in Cheapside, London, that may be described literally as the most expensive of its kind on earth. If \$5 gold pieces filled the entire trunk and \$5 bills fluttered in place of every one of the leaves, it would not buy the terra firma it occupies. For the land on which it stands, the northwest corner of Wood street and Cheapside, is worth 4 1/2 million dollars an acre. The tree has stood on this spot for over 200 years, while its site has augmented in value to almost fabulous proportions.

A Variety of Crops.

It is profitable to grow a variety of crops rather than one, as this gives crops to be marketed at different times of year. This increases the regularity of the farmer's income and distributes it over a greater period. This in turn enables him to do business on a smaller capital.

Leave apples out in a cool house till they begin to be cold. They will keep longer.

When it looks like rain, draw in a load or two of corn for husking on the big barn floor.

Box a few apples done up in soft paper and see how they will come out next spring.

Better clean out all surplus stock. Do not winter any stock that will not give profit.

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